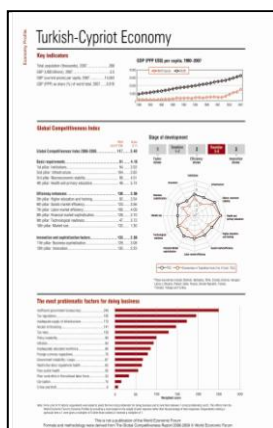




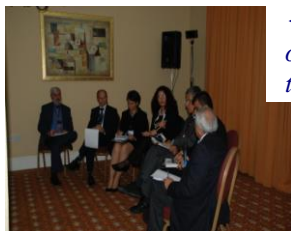
February 3, 2009, No. 87

Promoting Competitiveness in the Turkish Cypriot Community



▲ *The Turkish Cypriot Economy Profile, taken from the newly-released Competitiveness Report*

Mehmet Ali Talat—as well as academics, and international experts. The conference highlighted the completion of the first competitiveness report on the Turkish Cypriot economy, including a panel session on “Prioritizing the Economic Policy Agenda.” USAID has been promoting competitiveness in a variety of ways, including through direct assistance to firms and sectors; through the application of cutting edge research and methods; and by supporting efforts to promote constructive public-private dialogue on economic reform issues.



International Economics and Trade expert, Howard Rosen speaking at the conference ►

◀ *Conference panel discussion on “The contribution of workers to enhancing competitiveness”*



USAID joins local mulcher to increase awareness, save water



Mr. Ibrahim Metiner is a Turkish Cypriot who runs a private company that produces and sells mulch in two of Cyprus’s largest cities. When he came across SAVE’s publication, “How Does Your Garden Grow in Cyprus?” a how-to guide promoting water-wise landscaping in Cyprus, Mr. Metiner

reached out to SAVE, delighted to know his vision was shared by others. The local businessman is now distributing SAVE’s water-saving guide along with the packaged mulch to educate his buyers on the benefits and proper usage of mulch, while promoting the concept of water-wise landscaping. This successful partnership has been a great opportunity to work with a motivated local businessman and expand the impact of USAID’s programs. Mr. Metiner’s

initiative builds on USAID’s efforts to promote mulching as an effective alternative to traditional solid waste management practices and, more importantly, as a water conservation effort to help protect the most valuable natural resource of Cyprus.



The mission of USAID/Cyprus is to encourage cooperation between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot individuals and organizations to reduce tensions and promote a climate that will foster reconciliation and a durable peace settlement.

Economic Development and Growth for Enterprises

EDGE facilitated the 17th Tri-Chambers Roundtable meeting on January 20th where the TCCC, CTCI and the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry discussed the latest trends in Green Line trade as well as several practical steps to alleviate continued psychological and administrative barriers. Visiting legal expert Mr. Gary Gegenheimer conducted a presentation on consolidated supervision to TCC banking experts and also met with local finance and insurance

professionals. EDGE continued its work with the producers attending this year's FruitLogistica Fair in Berlin, including a delegation of pomegranate growers (which now operate under the name Alnar Ltd) who have produced their own brochure to support discussions with potential buyers.



Resource Efficiency Achievement Project

REAP wrapped up its Management Development Training series for the Turkish Cypriot electricity utility. In early February, REAP will hold a media event where certificates will be awarded to the training participants.

Capacity Development and Training

The CADET team gave presentations on intervention concepts to USAID as well as the Tour Guides Association and the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Industry (CTCI). They also participated in two focus group sessions with members of the TCCC and the CTCI. The first was to further define business issues most common to family-owned SMEs and, the second, to discuss types of projects to be addressed under a possible performance-based project management initiative.

Action for Cooperation and Trust

ACT supported a second round of workshops on the subject of "Teaching and Learning History; Discussing the Use of *Alternative Southeast European History Material* in Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot History Classrooms." This is part of a larger project that aims to equip Cypriot history teachers with the skills to conduct multi-perspective history lessons that encourage students' critical thinking and analysis. ACT held a presentation to share results of a recent study of "Perceptions on Sustainable Development and Climate Change in Cyprus." The quantitative telephone survey examined public attitudes toward coastal zone management; public awareness of the principles of sustainable development; and priority areas for bi-communal environmental cooperation. Overall, respondents agreed that bi-communal cooperation essential for resolving environmental priorities in Cyprus.

Supporting Activities that Value the Environment

SAVE is preparing to kick off the "Say No to Plastic Bags" public awareness campaign and is contacting potential partners, including local businesses. Restoration continues at the Church of Panayia Perghamiotissa in Akanthu/Tatlisu; current works include filling cracks, plastering, and installing windows and doors. The final works on the walkway and mosaics at Soli are wrapping up and the book documenting the process will soon be ready for print. SAVE is beginning to prepare for a June 2009 Water Summit that will build on SAVE's work on all aspects of water management and address the challenges that continue to face the island's water managers.



During his recent visit to Cyprus, EDGE agri-business consultant and alternative crop expert, Shlomy Raziel inspects the artichoke field of one of EDGE's GlobalGAP compliant farmers (top left); inspects a pomegranate tree in preparation for pruning (top right); and talks with a pomegranate grower about orchard maintenance (right)

News from Nicosia

January 28

President Demetris Christofias and Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat met for the 17th time. At this meeting, they begin discussions on the difficult "property issue." According to the UN Secretary General's Special Representative, Taye-Brook Zeihoun, the two leaders exchanged papers that outline the principles that will guide their discussions on property.

OUR PROJECTS

- The **Action for Cooperation and Trust (ACT)** program mainstreams the concepts of conflict resolution in over 120 projects that encourage Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to work on issues of common concern and solve problems together. Projects are currently underway in the areas of youth, education and tolerance, civil society strengthening, sustainable development and cultural heritage preservation. ACT is funded through a cooperative agreement between USAID and the UN Development Program (UNDP).
- The **Cyprus Partnership for Economic Growth (CyPEG)** includes activities that support economic growth in the Turkish Cypriot community to decrease the disparities between the communities and promote reconciliation. CyPEG is implemented by U.S. contractors under different USAID contract mechanisms.
 - The objective of the **Economic Development and Growth for Enterprises (EDGE)** project is to strengthen the domestic and international competitiveness of Turkish-Cypriot small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and help restructure the financial sector so that SMEs can thrive.
 - The **Resource Efficiency Achievement Program (REAP)** promotes more efficient use of water and energy by conducting audits and upgrades of representative business establishments and households. REAP also provides technical assistance to Turkish Cypriot energy experts.
 - The **Supporting Activities that Value the Environment (SAVE)** project focuses on improving (1) the competitiveness, financial status, and quality of basic services and infrastructure to more easily meet international and EU standards and (2) Turkish Cypriot capacity to manage natural and cultural resources for economic growth.
 - The **Capacity Development and Training (CADET)** project complements other USG-funded programs in Cyprus by providing capacity development and training in critical areas.